

In the Claims

1. **(currently amended):** A process for selectively converting dihydroxy-or polyhydroxy alcohols into carbonyl compounds using which process comprises the step of oxidizing said dihydroxy-or polyhydroxy alcohols with dioxygen (O_2) as oxidant in the presence of a catalytic system comprising

- (1) a copper salt, a copper salt containing a heterocyclic ligand or a copper complex salt, and
- (2) a base.

2. **(currently amended):** A process according to claim 1, wherein

the copper salt is selected from the group consisting of $CuCl$, $CuBr$, CuI , $CuNO_3$, $CuBF_4$,

$CuSO_4$, and $CuPF_6$;

the ligand is selected from the group consisting of 1,10-phenanthroline, 5-methyl-1,10-phen-

anthroline, 2,9-dimethyl-1,10-phenanthroline, 4,7-dimethyl-1,10-phenanthroline,

3,4,7,8-tetramethyl-1,10-phenanthroline, 4,7-dihydroxy-1,10-phenanthroline, batho-

phenanthroline, bathocuproinedisulfonate, 2,2'-bipyridine, 2,2'-bipyridyl-3,3'-di-

carboxylate, 2,2'-biquinoline, bis(2-pyridylethyl)amine, tris(2-pyridylethyl)amine,

2-pyridyl-(N-tert. butyl)-methylimine, (2-pyridyl)methanol, ethylene(2,5-dihydroxy-

phenylimine) ~~or~~ and bis(2-hydroxy-3,5-di(tert. butyl)phenyl)sulfide;

the copper complex salt is $[M_4(Cu_4OCl_{10})]$ or $[M(CuCl_3)]$ or $[M_2(CuCl_4)]$ or mixtures thereof wherein M

is an alkali metal cation, $[R_1R_2R_3R_4N]_4(Cu_4OCl_{10})$ or $[R_1R_2R_3R_4N](CuCl_3)$ or

$[R_1R_2R_3R_4N]_2(CuCl_4)$ or mixtures thereof wherein R_1 - R_4 is independently of one

another C_1 - C_6 alkyl, phenyl or benzyl; and

the base is selected from the group consisting of $Li(OH)$; $NaHCO_3$; Na_2CO_3 ; $Na(OH)$; K_2CO_3 ; $K(OH)$;

MgO ; $CaCO_3$; $Ca(OH)_2$; $BaCO_3$; Al_2O_3 (basic); a quaternary ammonium salt or a

hydrate thereof $[R_1R_2R_3R_4N](OH)$; $[R_1R_2R_3R_4N](Hal)$, wherein Hal is halogen and R_1 - R_4

is as defined above; an alcoholate $Na(OR_5)$, $K(OR_5)$ wherein R_5 is C_1 - C_6 alkyl ~~or~~ and a

heterogeneous basic support [[s]] selected from amberlite, ambersep, sepiolite,

hydrotalcit or bentonit.

3. **(currently amended):** A process according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, wherein the copper salt is $CuCl$; the ligand is a phenanthroline ligand; the copper complex is $[R_1R_2R_3R_4N](Cu_4OCl_{10})$ and the base is a quaternary ammonium salt or a hydrate thereof.

4. **(currently amended):** A process according to ~~any one of claim 1~~ **1** ~~[[3,]]~~ wherein the catalytic system is CuCl/1,10-phenanthroline/ $[(CH_3)_4N]OH \cdot 5 H_2O$ or CuCl/ $[(CH_3)_4N]OH \cdot 5 H_2O$.

5. **(currently amended):** A process according to ~~any one of claim 1~~ **1** ~~[[4,]]~~ wherein the process is carried out in the presence of a solvent at a temperature in the range of 30-140°C.